

Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Dallas/Ft. Worth

May 1990

MCCC NEWS

Volume 8 Issue 5

Commodore Announces The Amiga 3000

NEW YORK, NY -- April 24, 1990

Commodore Business Machines President Harold Copperman and his aggressive management team today dramatically defined multimedia as the company introduced the latest in its popular line of Amiga personal computers at a live multimedia demonstration at the Palladium. The powerful and elegant new Amiga 3000 brings enhanced performance capabilities and a new AmigaDOS 2.0 operating system to the company's line of multimedia products.

"The 3000 marks the first step in Commodore's new Amiga product marketing strategy and reinforces our serious bid to capture greater market share within the business, government and higher education markets," said Commodore Vice President of Marketing C. Lloyd Mahaffey. "We've delivered an incredibly competitive hardware system featuring lower cost, higher performance and added communications capabilities."

Mahaffey said key product features include a 16 or 25 Mhz, 68030 Motorola processor, a 68881 or 68882 math coprocessor, a true 32-bit architecture, 2 MB of memory standard (with an address space of over one gigabyte) and, as in all Amigas, true multitasking capability. The standard Amiga 3000 comes with a 40 MB hard drive and a 3.5-inch floppy disk drive and features a SCSI interface for added communication capability. Commodore also offers a 100 MB configuration.

Suggested retail price is \$3,299 for the 16 Mhz version, \$3,999 for the 25 Mhz version and \$4,499 for the 100 MB version. Shipments are expected to begin in July. Demonstration units are available at participating Authorized Commodore Amiga Reseller locations.

Commodore Director of Product Marketing Walt Simpson said the price/performance of the A3000 results from the effective integration of the Amiga's three custom chips with five new custom gate arrays which serve a variety of functions including bus

arbitration, RAM memory handling, SCSI device handling and video enhancing.

The Amiga 3000 also features a new operating system, AmigaDOS 2.0, which significantly enhances the look and functionality of the platform, Simpson said. Besides the new look, standards have been created for all system utilities, icons, requesters and gadgets to permit ease-of-use by both users and programmers, he said.

In addition, Commodore announced the inclusion of the ARexx interprocess communication protocol and programming language. The integration of ARexx into the AmigaDOS operating system will facilitate the control of external programs from within any application supporting ARexx, Simpson said. This feature, coupled with Commodore's new AmigaVision authoring system, creates a powerful multitasking environment for the creation of multimedia presentations.

Along with the A3000 announcement, Commodore introduced a number of strategic software and peripheral products, including:

- AmigaVision authoring system;
- Networking products providing connectivity with Arcnet, Novell NetWare, Ethernet, TCP/IP and NFS standards;
- Monitors, including 2024 high resolution monochrome and 1950 color multiscan; and
- Commodore Amiga 10 Stereo Audio Compact Speakers.

Commodore further announced an AmigaDOS 2.0 enhancer kit for A2000 series machines to be available in September. Availability of a 2.0 enhancer kit for A500 series machines will be announced at a future date.

AMAZING

Computer
Systems
Incorporated

NEW 2 Mb 501 clones
Now in stock \$110 w/0k
590 Hard Drives on SPECIAL
Limited Time User Group
Price \$ 615 while qtys.last

AMAZING News

*** Come See the AMIGA 3000**

*** All Day SATURDAYS**

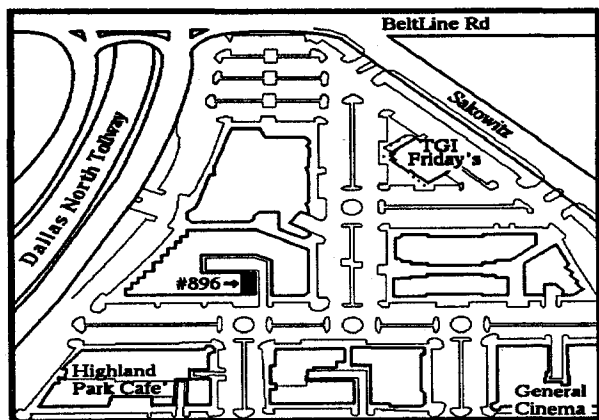
AMAZING Software Demos !!!

Come see the Latest and the Greatest !

*** NEW Ft. Worth AMAZING**

Will be opening around the beginning of May !

Not only does *AMAZING* have the largest selection of software (1,200 titles instock!), but for user group members software is always 28% off list & there are extra discounts on hardware & accessories, too!



Amazing Computer Systems

Village on the Parkway
5100 Beltline Rd #896
Dallas, Tx 75240

(214) 386-8383

Mon-Sat 10-6 Thurs 10-8

MC VISA American Express Discover &
The *AMAZING* Card Accepted
Same day shipping
Authorized *AMIGA* Dealer
Authorized *AMIGA* Service Center

Commodore's 2091 Hard Drive Controller

Hardware Impressions by Bill Raecke
Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Last month I wrote about my new Amiga 2000 and particularly about the GVP A3001 board inside of it. In that article I mentioned that I decided not to get the drive that GVP offers which fits on that board, but had decided instead to go with the more standard SCSI configuration. When I wrote those words, I did not have the hard drive or the controller to run it. I now have them both. So this month you get to read all about them.

Most of this article will deal with the Commodore 2091 controller since that is where I get to interface with the

"The 2091 controller is more than it claims to be. It is also a memory expansion unit....The memory is plugged in, not soldered..."

system. But before I start on that, let me tell you about the drive itself. It is a Quantum P105S. It is a 3 1/2 inch drive. I have seen it variously advertised as a 100 meg or a 105 meg drive. The name would lead me to believe it to be a 105 meg drive (although the controller recognizes it as a 100 meg drive) since the Quantum P40S is 40 meg and the P80S is 80 meg. As near as I have been able to determine, the P105S will actually format to 102.5 meg when the Fast File System is used. What happened to the other 2.5 meg (or where did the other 2.5 meg come from)? I'm not sure. At any rate, there is plenty of room for a while. As for speed, the drive is rated at 19 ms access time which makes it one of the fastest.

Now for the controller. The 2091 is the third controller I have had any experience with. The first was the C-Ltd drive/controller combination which we originally had on the club BBS when we were running it on an Amiga 1000. When we switched to an Amiga 2000, we upgraded to a Commodore 2090 running a Seagate 48 meg drive. Next to either of those systems, this is wonderful. I'm not going to do a comparison, however -- I just intend to give a rundown on the 2091 and let you judge for yourself.

The 2091 controller is more than it claims to be. It is also a memory expansion unit. Memory can be added to the board in a 512K, 1 meg, or 2 meg configuration. The memory is plugged in, not soldered, so it's easy to install. The drive can be mounted right on the board itself (assuming a 3 1/2 inch drive) so that your drive bays can be kept free. All partitions can use the Fast File System, including the boot partition, so there no need to set aside a small, slow partition just to get started.

Let me give you a brief synopsis of what it takes to get

up and running. Let's assume at this point that you have installed the 2091 and the associated drive in your 2000 and are ready to start using it. Get out the installation disk that comes with the drive. Click on the icon for the program called HDToolBox. (This is the program you will use to initially set up the drive and it will also be used any time you want to change things. You will eventually move this to your WorkBench partition.) You are presented with a screen containing eight buttons and a list of drives available. The list will more than likely be blank at this point. The first thing to do is to tell the controller what kind of drive you have and something about its characteristics. Sound difficult? Its not. First, click on the button named "Change Drive Type". This will bring up a screen containing all the drives which have been defined so far. The Quantum P40S and the Quantum P80S are already here. If you have one of these drives, simply select it and click on the "OK" button. If you have a different drive, click on the button that says "Define new drive type". You will be presented with a screen full of information that needs to be filled in such as the Manufacturer's Name, the Drive Name, the Drive Revision, number of Cylinders, number of Heads, Blocks per Track, and Blocks per Cylinder. But wait -- there's one more button. It's called "Read Configuration From Drive". Push it and the drive is accessed and all the values are filled in for you. I suppose that this may not work with all drives. If it doesn't, it's time to drag out the drive manual and fill in the blanks. With the Quantum, all the information was read in just fine. Only the number of heads is incorrect -- the controller treats the drive as if it had just one head with 2,929 cylinders -- but it works OK just the same.

After the drive is defined to the system you return to the main menu. Now it's time to click on the button named "Low-level Format Drive". This does just what it says -- it does the initial format on the entire drive. It sounds as though it would take a long time but it was actually just a couple of minutes. Next it's time to click on the button labeled "Verify Data on Drive". This searches the drive looking for bad sectors. If it finds any, it adds the sectors to the "bad sector list" and automatically avoids writing data to those sectors. My drive had no bad sectors.

Now you want to define your partitions. You can bypass this step if you like and the system will give you default partitions with default names. Most will want to control things a little more, especially with large drives. A forty meg drive partitioned into two twenty meg pieces is not too unreasonable, but fifty-one meg partitions are a little silly. Like everything else with this system, partitioning is easy. First, from the main menu of the HDToolBox program, click on the button named "Partition Drive". You will see a large bar stretching across the top of the screen. This represents the disk drive. On the left is the low cylinder number (0) and on the right is the high cylinder

Computer Emporium of Texas

" No more Mr. Nice Guy "

GVP Products

A2000-030 Ram/4	1329.95	A2000-HC2+0/30	534.95
A2000-030 Ram/8	1829.95	A2000-HC2+0/40Q	634.95
A2000-030/16	559.95	A2000-HC2+0/45	599.95
A2000-030/28	779.95	A2000-HC2+0/80Q	949.95
A2000-030/882/16	764.95	A2000-HC2+0/100Q	124.95
A2000-030/882/28	1044.95	A2501-4/0	1973.95
A2000-8/0	314.95	A2501-4/40Q	2320.95
A2000-8/0/30	609.95	A2501-4/80Q	2570.95
A2000-8/0/40Q	694.95	A3001-4/0	2219.95
A2000-8/0/45	664.95	A3001-4/40Q	2569.95
A2000-8/0/80Q	999.95	A3001-4/80Q	2819.95
A2000-8/0/100Q	1034.95	A500 HD/20	589.95
A2000-8/0/SQ44/44	1114.95	A500 HD/30	684.95
A2000-HC/0	209.95	A500 HD/40Q	788.95
A2000-HC/20	459.95	A500 HD/45	739.95
A2000-HC/30	509.95	A500 HD/80Q	1119.95
A2000-HC/40Q	605.95	Impact XC	214.95
A2000-HC/45	559.95	Impact XC/SQ44	990.95
A2000-HC/80Q	919.95	Impact XC/WT150	839.95
A2000-HC2+0/20	459.95	SQ44/44 SCSI	931.95

Our best seller...on sale AGAIN!

CAN DO! \$85.00
(User group card required)

For your Amiga 2000...

Flicker Fixer
Diamond Scan 14 "
\$989.95

Amiga 2000 Memory

0k	169.95
2 meg	289.00
4 meg	429.95
6 meg	569.95
8 meg	719.95

Call for the latest prices

Supra 2400 Modem

300, 1200, 2400 Baud
100% Hayes Compatible
\$119.95
with cable!

Amiga 500 Blow-out!

A501 Clone

512k w/ clock

\$79.95

(User group card required)

Cordless Mouse

\$89.95

Fatter Agnus Chip

Installed!!

\$109.95

817-577-3470 Metro 1-800-526-5548 Toll Free

number (on my drive, 2928). On the bar, any area in white is the active partition. This is the one which you are currently changing. Any crosshatched area is an inactive partition. A blank area has no partition defined for it. By default, there will probably be two partitions -- one will appear white and the other will be crosshatched. On the lower right of the white (active) partition is the size of that partition in megabytes. Want to make it smaller? Grab the pointer which is at the lower right of the partition area and move it to the left. The number of megabytes in the partition should have been updated and there is now a blank area on the bar where the partition used to be. Just move it to the size you want. Now take the other partition. Activate it by clicking on it, and resize it. Of course, now we have that nasty blank spot between the two partitions. Grab the second partition with the mouse (click and hold the left mouse button) and move the pointer to the left. Let go and the partition is now in its new location. Need to add or delete a partition? Just click the appropriate button and then point to the area on the bar which is to be affected, then resize it as before. Give each partition any name you want in the gadget supplied.

For people like me who like to have total control, there is another button called "Advanced Options". When you click on it, additional gadgets are added to the screen. There is a Starting Cylinder, Ending Cylinder, Total Cylinder, Buffers, a "Bootable Disk" setting (by default the first partition is bootable and the others are not), a Boot Priority, and a File System Button. The file system lets you choose Fast File System, Old File System and others. Fast File System is the default. The starting, ending, and total cylinder gadgets do what you would expect. You can control the size of partitions exactly by using these settings. Naturally, if you change Ending Cylinder, the Total Cylinder setting is updated automatically as is the bar displayed at the top of the screen. (Likewise, if you change Total Cylinder, the Ending Cylinder setting is automatically updated.) When you are finished, click on OK and you will be returned to the main menu.

There is just one more button to press. The one labeled "Save Changes to Drive" places all the information on the hard drive itself. If you have modified the size or location of an existing partition, the program will warn you that you are about to destroy information and ask if it should continue. If only new partitions have been added or if non-destructive changes have been made (such as changing the name of a partition) the program simply continues without warning.

After the changes have been saved to disk, it is time to re-boot. When the system comes up, all your partitions will automatically be there. There is no Mountlist required and no "Mount" command to add to your startup-sequence. All that remains to be done is to format each partition (the QUICK option works just fine) and start putting things out there. You may re-enter the HDToolBox program at any time to readjust or add partitions. It works like a charm. You can also "turn off" a partition if you use it infrequently or if you need the RAM. This is done with a special "Auto-Mount" switch inside the HDToolBox program.

The overhead is rather low for this controller. Adding

a partition costs about 23K plus whatever buffers you set aside (the default is 30 buffers or 15K).

I think that takes us to speed. I ran DiskPerf2 against my setup. What follows are the results of that test. For comparison, I am also listing floppy and RAD speeds on my machine and the hard drive speeds from the club BBS (The latter was done with a different program but should be comparable.) Remember that RAD on a 32 bit machine is a bit of a screamer as you can see by the numbers.

Quantum P105S with 2091 Controller

Create Files:	15 files/sec.		
Directory Scan:	406 entries/sec.		
Delete Files:	31 files/sec.		
Seek/Read Test:	128 seek/sec.		
Read/Write Speed Test: (bytes/sec.)			
Buffer: 512	Read: 44,856	Write: 21,967	
Buffer: 4k	Read: 232,603	Write: 158,875	
Buffer: 8k	Read: 314,698	Write: 242,053	
Buffer: 32k	Read: 549,568	Write: 300,969	
Buffer: 64k	Read: 622,669	Write: 319,298	
Buffer: 256k	Read: 748,982	Write: 347,210	

Seagate 48 meg with 2090 Controller

Create Files:	15 files/sec.		
Directory Scan:	102 entries/sec.		
Delete Files:	50 files/sec.		
Seek/Read Test:	88 seek/sec.		
Read/Write Speed Test: (bytes/sec.)			
Buffer: 512	Read: 59,578	Write: 28,493	
Buffer: 4k	Read: 100,824	Write: 154,202	
Buffer: 8k	Read: 174,762	Write: 218,453	
Buffer: 32k	Read: 327,680	Write: 262,144	

DF0:

Create Files:	1 files/sec.		
Directory Scan:	147 entries/sec.		
Delete Files:	88 files/sec.		
Seek/Read Test:	29 seek/sec.		
Read/Write Speed Test: (bytes/sec.)			
Buffer: 512	Read: 8,209	Write: 4,283	
Buffer: 4k	Read: 11,659	Write: 6,184	
Buffer: 8k	Read: 10,825	Write: 6,245	
Buffer: 32k	Read: 10,748	Write: 6,173	
Buffer: 64k	Read: 10,746	Write: 6,181	
Buffer: 256k	Read: 10,768	Write: 6,195	

RAD: (with FFS on 32 bit RAM & 28Mhz 68030)

Create Files:	285 files/sec.		
Directory Scan:	442 entries/sec.		
Delete Files:	546 files/sec.		
Seek/Read Test:	779 seek/sec.		
Read/Write Speed Test: (bytes/sec.)			
Buffer: 512	Read: 454,322	Write: 473,184	
Buffer: 4k	Read: 3,158,361	Write: 2,383,127	
Buffer: 8k	Read: 4,766,254	Write: 2,788,765	
Buffer: 32k	Read: 5,957,818	Write: 3,692,169	
Buffer: 64k	Read: 6,898,526	Write: 3,971,878	
Buffer: 256k	Read: 7,943,757	Write: 3,971,878	

...Continued On Next Page

M.A.S.T. Twindrive

Amiga Hardware Review by Johnny C. Kitchens
Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Disk drives have become so essential to the operation of computers that today most computers have a disk drive built right in. Quite a change from the day when no means of data storage was provided. For many Amiga buyers one of their first accessory purchases was an external drive. It was a necessity so as not to have to keep switching disks as the computer looked up commands on the SYS: disk and went back to the program disk to execute or run the program. A pain to deal with for even a short time.

For a long time the only external disk drive for the Amiga that was easy to find was the 1010. The improvement to the system with this addition was incredible in itself. It wouldn't be until the introduction of aftermarket disk drives that the shortcomings of the 1010 drive would show up. The new drives were much smaller, much more quiet, used far less power, and usually had a longer cable for easier positioning. Other features would also be available on various models. After looking over various models I decided that I wanted one of these small wonders.

Although I've owned a 1010 since day one of my Amiga and was satisfied with it, after seeing one of these drives, I decided that I wasn't all that satisfied. My 1010 was very loud in operation, and it suffered an affliction that all Amiga drives suffer, IT CLICKS. Newer drives seem to suffer this less than my 1010. Even my internal drive was quiet compared to it. I tried every "no click" program that came around. Only the first one made any headway. The clicking was softer after using the no click which fixed the KickStart disk for the 1000. The norm was to keep a disk in the 1010 at all times.

After seeing the dual disk drive that the club bought for the library, I was convinced that a dual was the way to go. I chose the M.A.S.T. Twindrive. M.A.S.T., which stands for Memory And Storage Technology, an Australian company,

have produced a disk drive that is compact, quiet, doesn't CLICK, has dust doors and a long cable, and even has switches to deactivate drives to save memory for those with memory shortages. With the Twindrive you get two disk drives sandwiched into a case that takes up less space than the 1010 in every way. Compared to the 1010 you have to pay attention to notice any noise. The lower drive is the quieter of the pair. Instead of CLICKING the Twindrive lights blink very dimly. The lights have to be low in the room before you can see this blinking so it's no bother at all. Performance wise I couldn't see that big of a difference -- almost the same you could say. If you want speed get a hard drive.

As far as negative aspects for the drive is concerned, nitpicking is the rule here. Cosmetically the upper drive didn't set into the case all the way. The ejection buttons are much smaller than other drives. The Twindrive's lights blink during operation, I suppose to save power. This in itself is no problem. Commodore elected to have the lights stay on continuously. The light stays on long after the drive is apparently finished its run. Apparently there is one last operation carried out which this long light covers to make sure you don't eject too soon. The Twindrive's blinking lights appear to stop, then shortly later one more blink. If you're lucky ejecting before that last light gets you message to reinsert the disk -- otherwise!!! I fell for this several times before getting used to this difference.

If you're in the market for a new external drive take a look at this drive, or for that matter any of the aftermarket drives. Evidently Commodore has taken notice of these drives as the new 1011 drive is of the compact type. I wonder how close they got in size to these drives and does it CLICK???

Commodore's 2091 Hard Drive Controller

(Continued From Page 5)

To sum it all up, I'm very happy. I have had only one problem. The 2091 controller changes the setting of the zero byte in the system. There is nothing wrong with this except that nothing has done it before. The effect is that some programs that used to work fine will no longer function quite right and in some cases may not function at all. I have had problems with SID (the directory utility), ARexx, and with Turbo Silver. The fault is with the programs that no longer work, not with the controller. Of

course, if your programs don't work, it doesn't matter whose fault it is. Public domain to the rescue. There is a program on the BBS and in the library called ZeroClear that resets the zero byte. Add it to your startup sequence and everything is fine again.

If you are in the market for a good drive and controller, keep this combination in mind. As far as I am concerned, it's a terrific combination.

The RS-232 Standard - Part 2

General Information from John Ware
Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

(This article is continued from last month)

There are actually two methods of sending data as far as the bit stream is concerned. The first is asynchronous, or stop and start. The data is sent one character at a time. Sometimes the characters will flow one after the other without any time between them. Other times there will be long periods of nothing being sent. This requires the start and stop bits. You will notice from the drawing above the start bit will ALWAYS be low. The receiving UART "knows" how many character bits will be sent, about the parity bit, and the number of stop bits. If no data is being sent, the line will stay in the 1 state after the last stop bit. This allows the receiving UART to wait for the next start bit to assemble the next character.

Synchronous data transmission works somewhat like ASync except for two things. There are no start and stop bits, and the bit stream will be continuous. When no real data is being sent, a special character called SYNC will be sent. This method of data transfer is rarely used but it can reduce the time required to send data because the start and stop bits are not sent. This can cut up to 1/5 of the time required by the ASync method.

The RS-232 standard says nothing about ASCII or UARTS. But because all three are closely related, they are usually assumed to be part of the RS-232 standard. What RS-232 does define is the type of connector and the function of the pins. There are two types of RS-232 devices if you look at them from the connector viewpoint, DTE and DCE. DTE means Data Terminal Equipment. A terminal is one example. Data Connection Equipment was defined as phone company supplied boxes used to connect to the phone system. The connector is defined as having two rows of contacts, one with 13 contacts, and the other with 12 contacts. This connector is usually called either a DB 25 or serial connector. All 25 of the pins have defined uses but only 9 are in common use today.

Pin Name Function

1	FG	Frame ground, connects case grounds together
2	TD	Transmitted data
3	RD	Received data
4	CTS	Clear to send, used to control data flow
5	RTS	Request to send, used to control data flow
6	DSR	Data set ready
7	SG	Signal ground, common data, control ground
8	CD	Carrier detect, used with modems
20	DTR	Data terminal ready
22	RI	Ring Indicator

The functions of the pins can be grouped into three classes. The first class is the actual data transfer pins, 2 and 3. The second class is the transfer control pins, 4 and 5. These two pins control the data transfer. For example; if a printer is busy it cannot accept any more characters. If characters are sent at this time they will be lost. By using the control pins the printer can tell the computer that it is busy. The third class, pins 6, 8, 20, and 22, is for hardware control and status checking. Pins 6 and 20 allow the two devices to check if both are on and able to transfer data. Pins 8 and 22 are primarily for use with modems. Pin 8 indicates that a carrier has been detected. Pin 22 provides indication of a ring signal. Pin 7 is the common return for all of the other pins.

If one device is wired as a DTE and the other is a DCE, connecting them together is simple. All you need is a cable with the 9 pins connected straight through. If both devices are either DTE or DCE, things are not so simple. The cable will have to have pin 2 on one end connected to pin 3 on the other end. Pins 4 and 5, 6 and 20 will also have to be transposed the same way as pins 2 and 3. In addition pin 8 may also have to be connected to pin 20 on each end of the cable. Another factor is the gender of the connectors

SOF-TEX

Offering Quality Service & Repair
For Disk Drives and Computers

Hours: 10AM to 8PM
Monday thru Saturday
(817) 577-0410 (Metro)

Software Terminal

Amiga Software and Hardware

P.O. Box 123225
Fort Worth, Texas 76121
(817) 737-3297

involved. In some cases the connectors are not 25 pin connectors. Because only 9 or less pins are used, some devices use a 9 pin connector. The Apple MacIntosh computers use a wierd 8 pin mini-din connector in addition to the fact that they are NOT RS-232 devices. They are RS-443. A cable is available from any Apple dealer that will convert them to RS-232.

At first it may appear very difficult to connect things up but it is easy. Just get the manuals for the two devices involved. This will tell you what each pin is used for. Most of the time all you need to do is to connect the transmit data pin on one end to the receive data pin on the other end. Connect the "clear to send" pin to the "request to send" pin on the other end. Next connect the data set ready pin to the data terminal ready pin on the other end. About the only time carrier detect and ring indicator are used is with modems. You can usually leave these unconnected. In the rare case where they are needed, you can connect either or both to the "data terminal ready" pin on each end of the cable. The main thing is to READ the manuals. They tell you what each pin requires.

Three of the more common cables are wired as shown below. The first one is for a DTE to DCE device. One of the other two will normally work for two DTE or DCE devices. In the middle one pins 6 and 8 on one side are connected to pin 20 on the other side. Try one of these three cables first.

RS-232 defines a 1 or high to be from -3 to -24 volts and a 0 or low to be from +3 to +24 volts. You will usually see from -12 to +12 on a pin. In addition the pins have been designed to withstand short circuits to each other or ground

without any damage but it pays to double check your connections. Some equipment makes cut corners here and damage can result from shorts. If things don't work and they are connected properly, check the voltages on the pins that are used. If you find any somewhere in the range from -3 volts to +3 volts you have hardware problems. These are easy to fix but you must know what you are doing.

A modified form of RS-232 is standard on both the 64 and 128 computers. They are in compliance except for the voltages. Look at page 355 in the 64 programmers reference manual and you will see that all 9 of the RS-232 pin functions are available. The logic levels are inverted and use 5 volt levels. If you try to connect an RS-232 device to either one you will FRY the computer. In addition there is also a 9 volt AC source that can be used to generate both +12 and -12 volts from. A level converter can be built for under \$20 using parts from the local Radio Shack. All you need is 4 diodes, two 100mfd 20 volt caps, two 7LS04 inverters, a 1488 line driver, a 1489 line receiver, and the connectors. They also have some very nice small boxes to put it in.

2-----2	2-----3	2-----3
3-----3	3-----2	3-----2
4-----4	4-----5	4-----5
5-----5	5-----4	5-----4
6-----6	7-----7	7-----7
7-----7	6+----20	6-----20
8-----8	8+----8	20-----6
20-----20	20-----+6	8 not used 8
22-----22	22 not used 22	22 not used 22

Club Discounts

THESE DEALERS OFFER
SPECIAL DISCOUNTS TO
MCCC MEMBERS

BE SURE TO SHOW YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD

Action Computer

C64, C128, Amiga Hardware & Service
2720 Royal Lane
Dallas, Texas 75229
(214) 484-7838

Amazing Computer Systems

Amiga Software and Hardware
5100 Beltline Rd. #896
Dallas, Texas 75240
(214) 386-8383

Computer Emporium

Amiga Hardware - 64, 128, Amiga Software
5033-E Rufe Snow
N. Richland Hills, Texas 76180
(817) 577-3470

Metropolitan Computers

Amiga Software and Hardware
800 East Arapaho Suite 110
Richardson, Texas 75081
(214) 437-9119

Software Terminal

Amiga Hardware
P.O. Box 123225
Fort Worth, Texas 76121
(817) 737-3297

Sof-Tex

C64, C128, Amiga Repair
(817) 577-0410 (Metro)

Top Amiga Library Additions

Public Domain and Shareware News from Bill Raecke
Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

LHUnarc by Jonathan Forbes

By now, everyone who is involved with archiving or unarchiving files is aware that the the program LHarc has just about taken over. It has done this despite the fact that it is painfully slow because it compresses so well. Check out Harold Williams' article in last month's newsletter for full speed comparisons.

LHUnarc solves at least part of that problem. Now only the archiving part of the process will take forever. Unarchiving takes considerably less than forever. Take a look at these tests that I ran. In each case both the source and destination files were in RAM.

HamPizza.lzh

Archived size is 93,857 bytes.
Contains two files totaling 97,396 bytes.

LHarc: 11.0 seconds

LHUnarc: 6.2 seconds

TBuildScreen.lzh

Archived size is 75627 bytes.
Contains 21 files totaling 180,109 bytes.

LHarc: 10.9 seconds

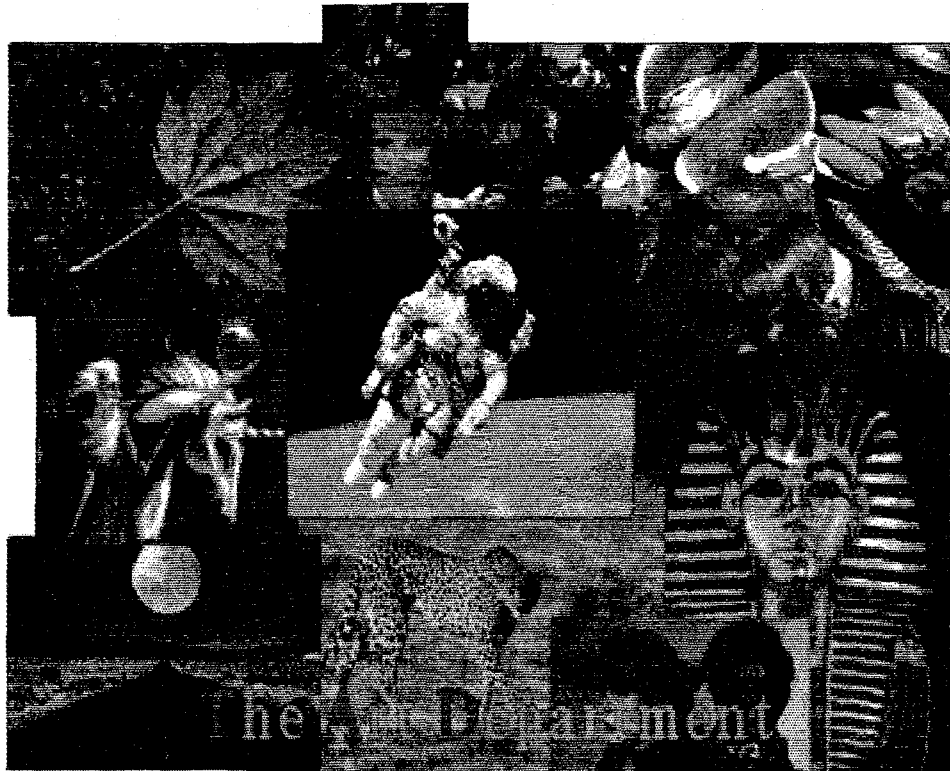
LHUnarc: 6.1 seconds

On a standard Amiga, the results would be much more dramatic. Check out MCCC-A_187.

DemoPic from The Art Department

No, The Art Department is not the name of a group of students working together to produce Amiga art. The Art Department is the name of a new product which can be used to manipulate Amiga art. The DemoPic on this disk is quite amazing. It is a montage of various art most of us have in our collections. The pictures were originally full screen images. For this montage, they have been resized so that all of them can fit on a standard overscan display. The result is breathtaking. There has been no loss of picture quality with the reduction. The pictures are just as crisp and the colors just as true as their full screen counterparts.

This kind of quality has never been possible before. I'll be looking for The Art Department to hit the local stores. Count on me to be in line for one of the first copies. For a peek into the future of Amiga graphics, take a look at MCCC-A_188.



IconJ by Rich Franzen

IconJ is a substitute for the IconX program which is part of the normal WorkBench. IconX allows you to execute a script by clicking on an icon from the WorkBench. IconJ does the same thing (and is 100% compatible) but also provides the following additions:

IconJ can send its output to files.

IconJ provides full support for conditional execution.

IconJ will allow interaction from the keyboard.

IconJ will execute ARExx scripts.

IconJ allows the script to be located anywhere - even inside the icon.

The advantages of all this should be quite obvious if you are used to running things using the WorkBench. It's nice, for example, to be able to keep script files in the "s:" directory, where they belong, and still be able to execute that script from an icon. It's also nice to be able to include things like "Ask" commands and have them work from the WorkBench.

It's powerful, it's easy to use, and it works. What more can anyone expect? Check out MCCC-A_189 for this one.

May Spring Cleaning Specials

Saturday, May 5th, 12th & 19th **ONLY!**

30% off on all Apple, Amiga & IBM software.

1mb SIMMS for the Mac & Amiga - Only \$89 each.

Additional 3% Discount to all user group members who present their membership cards.

Special pricing on Amiga hardware.

See us at the Galaxy Fair
May 11-13, 1990 at the Fairmont Hotel

Metropolitan Computer Products, Inc.

800 E. Arapaho Suite 110

(three lights east of Central Expwy.)

Richardson, Texas 75081

(214) 437-9119

Fax (214) 231-1583

Two DND Offerings from SSI

Amiga Software Reviews by William Dockendorf
Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

"Dungeon Masters Assistant Volume II: Characters and Treasures" and "Dragons of Flame" are two recent releases by TSR Inc. and SSI (Strategic Simulations Inc.) that are billed as "Official Advanced Dungeons and Dragons Computer Products". Dungeons and Dragons (also known as DND) is a registered trademark owned by TSR Inc. and is probably the best known role-playing system as well as being one of the older systems that spawned many of the current systems. It is so well known that many people colloquially refer to most role-playing games as DND or DND-like games. Until relatively recently, TSR did not want to license its trademark to any computer games since most did not live up to the standards that they wanted. The result is that there are many computer games that have DND-like role playing systems but none that closely mirrored the DND rules.

TSR eventually determined that SSI could be trusted to produce products that TSR would feel comfortable with endorsing. Since then, several very well done computer programs have been produced. Some have been stuck strictly to the DND type of play and allow a party of characters to have a series of adventures and advance in abilities under the DND system. Some of these games are "Pool of Radiance", "Curse of the Azure Bonds", and "Champions of Krynn". Other games have DND underpinnings but hide most of the details from the user and do not require any knowledge of DND to play well. Among the games that fit this description are "Hillsfar" and "Heroes of the Lance". They have also produced a wargame type of game called "War of the Lance". Another category of computer programs that is being released is the Dungeon Master's Assistant series designed to help out in the record keeping job that a DM (Dungeon Master - his/her function is a combination of referee, arbitrator, and scenario designer) must do to keep a DND game (one that is run for a group of people) running smoothly.

Thanks to Clark Smith, Territory Sales Manager for Electronic Arts for the opportunity to review these newest titles.

Dungeon Masters Assistant Volume II: Characters and Treasures

This program is not a game, it is a supplement or "assistant" for a Dungeon Master who is running or would like to run a DND campaign. It is the second in a series, the first being a random encounter generator. As any experienced DM knows, there can be a lot of rolling of dice and bookkeeping involved in a campaign. This series is design to help out in those tasks. This particular program has two main functions. The first is a character generator and the second is a treasure generator.

As a character generator, this program works very nicely. You have the option of totally generating the character or letting the player do the rolling and entering the six numbers rolled for the character into the computer and getting a full report on the character which can be easily printed out. The best advantage of this program is that it takes into consideration all of the characteristics of the character and puts them into a textual report which can be saved to disk and also printed out. It automatically takes



into account the race and class of the character and puts in all of the little special abilities and characteristics that generally have to be looked up by hand in a dozen different places. This means that things such as exactly how much weight the character can carry, his/her chance to bend bars, saving throws, chance of finding secret doors, etc. are all written down and have had all the appropriate modifiers figured in. To me, this is the biggest advantage of this program since, in my experience, it's almost impossible to remember all of these things and get all the numbers right when first rolling a new character. Once the character has been generated, a simple text editor is included to let you make any changes that you want before printing it out.

In its second major function, it also does a nice job. You can specify a type of treasure to generate or you can let it pick a treasure at random. It allows you to either include the new treasures in the "Unearthed Arcana" book or to leave them out. It can be a great time saver if you are designing a whole dungeon and have a lot of potential treasures that have to be rolled up and written down. If you have a printer, it's almost automatic to easily generate and get a printed report of a treasure.

The manual for this program is short, but that's reasonable since it doesn't need to explain much, and to effectively use it, you need the DND manuals which have much more information than could reasonably be put in a manual.

The program has some drawbacks, however. It is completely text based and has no menus or other niceties. I think this is due to the fact that it is available on many different computers and they wanted it to work the same on each system and be easily portable. Another slight problem is the copy protection. You can copy the disk with no problem, but you must keep the manual around and type in a word from it each time you run the program. I find this to be irritating and often I can't determine the right word in these situations since I don't know if the "fourth word on line 13 of page 8" is determined by counting things like chapter and section names as lines and whether the number at the start of a section counts as a word.

In all, it's a nice program especially for the active DM, but I would hesitate to spend \$30 or more for it. If it were bundled with Volume I for \$30 or had some more functionality, I would call it a must have for the serious DM.

Dragons of Flame

This is a DND style game set in the Dragonlance world. It is a sequel to Heroes of the Lance. If you enjoyed Heroes of the Lance, then you'll almost certainly enjoy this one. Its main differences are the ability to have 10 characters instead of 8 (which allows you to greet and pick up temporary characters that you meet), new and different monsters, and the fact that not everything is in one dungeon. You must go outdoors and across the land to several

different locations.

The manual is fairly short and most of it is taken up by descriptions of the 8 characters that are under your control. Even though it is based on DND, most of the details are hidden from you (or taken care of automatically), so you don't really need to know anything about DND to play it. The manual gives you enough information to start playing, but if you intend to play it a lot or wish to finish it, I would very much recommend getting the clue book.

The basic idea of the game is that you have control of 8 characters (or companions) that are on a quest. There are five fighters whose main job is to fight, one magic-user who can cast offensive spells, one cleric who can cast healing

and other defensive spells, and one thief who is good for performing any acrobatic type feats like jumping a cavern or avoiding a trap. Only one of the characters is under your control at a time and is the only one appearing on the screen where the action is. The rest are all represented at the bottom of the screen and are assumed to be following the lead character. The lead character does

all of the fighting and can be swapped out when he takes too much damage. The lead character takes most of the damage in a fight but in some cases, the first four characters may be affected. Also, if the cleric or magic-user is in the first four characters, he can cast spells to help out the lead character. The game plays mostly like an arcade game but with the strategy elements of it are taken from DND.

When moving outdoors, you are given an overview of the land and move the party along it. When an encounter occurs or when the party enters a location, the play changes to a two dimensional view from the side and the character can move left or right on the screen. Pushing the joystick up or down changes the view of the screen by 90 degrees to allow you to move in a different direction.

Some good things about this program are the fact that you can easily install it your hard drive, and you can save the game and finish it later or restore it after something bad happens and try again. On the negative side, you do have to keep the manual around since you have to type in a word or number from it when you start the program. Another problem I have with the game is that some of the details of the game are too hidden or don't seem to make much of a difference. For example, I could tell little difference in my combat capabilities from one character to another. If one character has extra strength or a very magical sword, I would like to be able to see an effect. Unfortunately it seems that your ability to hit most of the monsters is not enhanced when you have a better sword at least in the parts of the game I got to. It is possible that later in the game the difference becomes more obvious.

If you are a big DND fan you may want to check this out just for interest's sake. On the whole it looks like a fair arcade style game with a few twists thrown in to simulate a DND environment.

Software For This
Article was Provided by
Electronic Arts

What Makes a Real Programmer?

Real Programmers ...

Don't eat quiche. Real programmers don't even know how to spell quiche. They like Twinkies, Coke and palate-scorching Szechwan food.

Don't write applications programs. They program right down to the bare metal. Application programs are for dullards who can't do system programming.

Don't write specs. Users should be grateful for whatever they get. They are lucky to get any program at all.

Don't comment their code. If it was hard to write, it should be hard to understand and even harder to modify.

Don't draw flowcharts. Flowcharts are, after all, the illiterate's form of documentation. Cavemen drew flowcharts; look how much it did for them.

Don't read manuals. Reliance on a reference is a hallmark of the novice and the coward.

Don't use Cobol. Cobol is for wimpy application programmers.

Don't use Fortran. Fortran is for wimpy engineers who wear white socks, pipe stress freaks, and crystallography weenies. They get excited over finite state analysis and nuclear reactor simulation.

Don't use PL/I. PL/I is for insecure momma's boys who can't choose between Cobol and Fortran.

Don't use BASIC. In fact, *no* programmers use BASIC after reaching puberty.

Don't use APL, unless the whole program can be written on one line.

Don't use LISP. Only effeminate programmers use more parentheses than actual code.

Don't use Pascal, Bliss, ADA or any of those sissy-pinko computer science languages. Strong typing is a crutch for people with weak memories.

Never work 9 to 5. If any real programmers are around at 9am it's because they were up all night.

Don't play tennis or any other sport which requires a change of clothes. Mountain climbing is OK, and real programmers often wear climbing boots to work in case a mountain should suddenly spring up in the middle of the machine room.

Disdain structured programming. Structured programming is for compulsive, prematurely toilet-trained neurotics who wear neckties and carefully line up sharpened pencils on an otherwise uncluttered desk.

Don't like the team programming concept. Unless, of course, they are the Chief Programmer.

Have no use for managers. Managers are a necessary evil. Managers are for dealing with personnel bozos, bean counters, senior planners and other mental defectives.

Scorn floating point arithmetic. The decimal point was invented for pansy bedwetters who are unable to "think big".

Don't drive clapped-out Mavericks. They prefer BMWs, Lincolns or pick-up trucks with floor shifts. Fast motorcycles are highly regarded.

Don't believe in schedules. Planners make up schedules. Managers "firm up" schedules. Frightened coders strive to meet schedules. Real programmers ignore schedules.

Like vending machine popcorn. Coders pop it in the microwave oven. Real programmers use the heat given off by the CPU. They can tell what job is running just by listening to the rate of popping.

Know every nuance of every instruction and use them all in every real program. Puppy architects won't allow execute instructions to address another execute as the target instruction. Real programmers despise such petty restrictions.

Don't bring brown bag lunches to work. If the vending machine sells it, they eat it. If the vending machine doesn't sell it, they don't eat it. Vending machines don't sell quiche.

RAM Expanders

C-64 / C-128 Hardware Information

From the Mid-Nebraska Users of Commodores Newsletter

The last year has seen the introduction of RAM expanders for both the 64 and 128. When the 64 first appeared in late 1982, it was a real marvel in home computers, where 16k was considered a fairly capacious machine. By 1985, when the 128 appeared, its memory capacity was also considered quite large. However, the introduction and success of the IBM PC's and their clones, together with such machines as the MacIntosh and the Amiga, with 1 meg of memory and up, has brought about a software revolution. Not to be outdone, 64 and 128 programmers have pushed the memory capacities of these machines to the limits in order to provide some of the same features for our limited memory computers as exist for the big boys. Thus leading to the introduction of the RAM expanders.

There are three of the expanders produced by Commodore: The 1700 of 128k and the 1750 of 512k for the 128, and the 1764 of 256k for the 64. Another firm (called the Quick Brown Box) offers a line of more limited expansions ranging in capacity from 16k to 64k, the expanders being named (you guessed it!) Quick Brown Box. Unlike the Commodore models, these are battery supported and will retain memory contents even when the current to the machine is cut off. The batteries are advertised to have an extended shelf life of ten years.

The term "RAM expander" is misleading. They do not expand the available RAM within the machine's circuitry in any way. In fact, they act in similar fashion to a disk drive. The user may save files to the expander and retrieve them from it, but it cannot make possible the storage of larger and more sophisticated programs within the machine's memory. However, programs are now written which are too long for the machine's memory but which can be stored within the expander in modules. The main program, stored in the computer's RAM, will call in each module from the expander as required overwriting it when the next program module is called. There's nothing new about this. The older CP/M machines did this routinely. However, they featured very fast disk drives, reducing the time of switching program modules. With a drive as slow as the 1541, or even the faster 1571, this method is hardly feasible. The expander, however, has no moving parts and is almost instantly accessible to the computer's operating system or to a program's master module, thus making more sophisticated programs possible for the 64 and the 128.

Such programs are quite rare, however. Most of the word-processing programs evaluated on this disk are configured to use the expanders in one of several ways. The most frequently used way is as an adjunct disk drive, called "RAMdisk". When this mode is used, the parent program is loaded into the machine's RAM as usual. The expander's memory can be partitioned into several sections, each of which can contain a separate file. With the word-processors

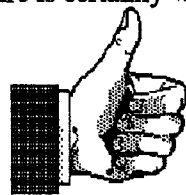
the user may work on several files, storing them temporarily in the expander during a work session and then saving to disk at the end of that session. There are two advantages: since less internal RAM is required for holding text files in progress, programs can be somewhat longer and thus more sophisticated. Also the user has almost instant access to more than one file, much faster than with a disk drive.

The second mode uses the expander as with CP/M to store program sub-modules. There is a third mode of use, however. If the expander can retain files when the current to the computer is turned off (as can the QBB), the expander can also be used for quick access to frequently used programs and to make unnecessary the purchase of two disk drives. This is where the Quick Brown Box expanders have the advantage over the Commodore expanders. If you have a set of frequently used utilities, with QBB you can store them semi-permanently there and access them within seconds as soon as the computer is turned on. When a main program, such as a word-processor is stored in QBB, it can be loaded into memory within very few seconds without the need of a disk drive. With a one-drive system this obviates the need to switch between the program disk and the data storage disk.

GEOS is the one program I know of that makes effective use of the Commodore expanders for storing program modules for rapid access. Anyone who has used GEOS with a one-drive system knows the frustration of continually switching between the system disk and the work disk. Even when all the necessary modules are stored on the same disk with the system program, or with two disk systems, there is considerable frustration because the Commodore drives are so slow. With the expanders it is possible to load all of the modules you intend to use into the cartridge and then to enjoy the rapid access to them which the expander provides. Also, GeoPaint and other bit-mapped graphics programs use gobs of memory, requiring frequent saves. With an expander in place, the saves can be done very rapidly, leaving saving to the disk until the end of the work session.

While the expanders are relatively expensive, ranging in price from about \$50 to \$150, they can substitute in many cases for a second disk drive. They can also lessen the amount of time spent on the mechanics of computer operation and reduce the frustration of waiting for the disk drives to manipulate files.

After all, home computing is supposed to be fun. Anything which enhances the pleasure is certainly worth considering.



Platinum Scribble!

An Amiga Software Review by James N. Short
From the Newsletter of The Commodore Users Of Bartlesville

Four years ago, the Amiga 1000 was introduced at a sight and sound gala at Carnegie Hall. For the next few months Amiga World wrote in the most glowing terms about the almost unbelievable features of this new computer. It even had a simple word processor, a.k.a. Notepad. Those of us who purchased an Amiga in late 1985 soon learned that we had a computer full of bugs, with virtually no software other than a few demo disks. The "word processor" might have been acceptable in 1975 but for 1985 it was disgracefully inadequate. Some of the bugs were corrected with the release of Workbench 1.1 in early 1986, and at about the same time, Micro-Systems Software, Inc. released Scribble!. Although the first version had a number of deficiencies, it did raise the Amiga word processing capability almost to the level of the old Commodore 64. When Commodore introduced Workbench 1.2, Scribble!2 was offered as an upgrade by Micro-Systems Software. Scribble!2 had many nice features, such as pull-down menus, a dictionary, spelling checker, a fast file loading system, and it was fast and easy to use. I suspect that many Amiga owners are still using Scribble!2 and are quite happy with it.

This year the latest upgrade from Micro-Systems Software appeared under the name Platinum_Scribble! It has been almost four years since the original Scribble! was released, and word processors have come a long way by now, so Platinum_Scribble! should be a real world beater, right? WRONG!

Platinum_Scribble! comes with two disks, and a 150 page manual in a convenient three-ring notebook. The programs are about three times as large as the older version, occupying a little more than one megabyte on my hard disk. It runs under Workbench 1.3, so a greater variety of printers can be used now. But if your printer is not in the Preference list, you may have to fall back to an obsolete dot system to imbed printing commands in the document. The software permits graphics incorporation into text, a feature I have yet to try. The dictionary has been expanded to 100,000 words, and there is a Thesaurus with 470,000 words. Up to eight colors can be used, or as little as two, and the screen can be used in normal or interlace mode. About 40 lines of text can be viewed in interlace mode, and if the right combination of colors, contrast and brightness are selected, flicker is not much of a problem. However, I still prefer the non-interlaced mode.

Most of the previous features of Scribble!2 have been retained, such as multiple document windows, edit, cut, copy, paste, bold, italics, underline, search, find, replace, etc. The document file system is different, more inconvenient to use in my opinion, and seems to be slower than the previous version. The old version of Scribble! displayed a requester which permitted either loading or deletion of unwanted letters. As yet I have found no way to

delete unwanted letter files from Platinum_Scribble!, other than through the CLI.

The dictionary guess feature is much slower, perhaps because of the size of the dictionary, which should probably be moved into RAM: to be acceptable. Maybe I will get used to it, but it seems to be a step backwards, and if I didn't have a hard disk, I think the slower dictionary and file loading would be very annoying. Which brings me to the worst feature of the package.

Platinum_Scribble! comes on two disks, and even has a program to install it on a hard disk. My copy evidently has a bug, because when I tried to install only those files that were necessary, the program proceeded to copy all of the Workbench directories as well. I now had two sets of libs, devs, c, etc. on my hard disk, and when I tried to delete the files from the Scribble! drawer I scrambled my hard disk files. Fortunately I had a backup, so I only lost a few hours. The second time, I didn't use the install program, but copied the necessary files one by one from the CLI. This is my second attempt at this review, because I thought I would take another look at the Hard Disk install requester. After all, I thought, I could always cancel to remove the requester. So I clicked back to Workbench, loaded Platinum_Scribble! from a floppy and opened the Install Hard Disk icon just to take one more look at the requester for this review. When I hit "cancel" another requester popped up and I hit "cancel" again so quickly that I don't remember exactly what it said, but the results were disastrous. A stream of deleted files crossed the screen, and everything in the Platinum_Scribble! drawer was deleted from my hard disk. This included about one page of my first effort at this review. This time it was a little easier, since I had already backed-up Platinum_Scribble! to another partition on the hard disk, but of course the review was lost.

The second worst feature is the name, eighteen characters including the underline and exclamation mark. It is like typing a letter to read a directory from CLI. And it is so easy to forget the exclamation mark and get a "file not found" message. The obvious solution is to rename it and make the appropriate assignments, but this really shouldn't be necessary in a well written piece of commercial software. I wonder if Micro-Systems Software ever heard of the term "User-Friendly".

Maybe my experience has prejudiced my opinion, but I don't think the new version is worth the price of the upgrade. There are some nice new features in Platinum_Scribble! but if you only use a word processor to write simple letters or documents such as this, Scribble!2 works as will and seems to be faster. If I had it to do over, I would either stick with Scribble!2 or use the money to buy a more comprehensive word processor.

It Came From the Desert

An Amiga Software Review by Glenn Turner
Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Ants, twenty feet tall, go marching one by one using your home town as a human picnic basket! In the new game from Cinemaware, *It Came From the Desert*, you are a meteorologist studying a meteor which crashed nearby. Since the meteor has landed, strange things have been occurring all over town. There is a headless cow found at one of the farms, and one of the mines is having insect trouble. Your job is to collect enough evidence to convince the mayor of the town to mobilize the military base nearby. As you collect this evidence, there are a number of problems which you run into. There are the ants themselves, the neighborhood gangs which will run you off the road in a game of chicken, fires, falling asleep at the wheel, and an occasional knife fight.

The graphics in this game are quite impressive as in most cinemaware games. The sound is also good, however, all speech is printed on the screen and the music can get irritating because it takes hours to play this game. There is only one real down side to the game: If you mess up by making a

wrong decision at the start of the game, you will not get another chance to correct it. Disk access time is not terribly slow considering the graphics it has to load from all three disks. As in most Cinemaware games, arcade action is combined with adventure which makes an exciting game that does not get old fast. Thanks to Clark Smith of Electronic Arts for the use of this intriguing game.

Notice to BBS Members

In order to meet the needs of our expanding club, the MCCC BBS system has undergone major changes.

- The Graphics BBS has been taken down.
- Both telephone lines are now being used by the ASCII BBS.
- We have switched BBS software and are now using the Paragon system which allows multiple users to access the BBS at the same time.
- The hard drive has been expanded from 48 meg to 80 meg.

This means more download space, an easier time getting logged on, and more liberal time limits. What it also means is that if you get a busy signal on 268-4191, try calling 268-4196. Both numbers are "Metro".

By the way, if you are in need of some pre-owned equipment, there will be some available. Contact Okley or one of his helpers for more information.

The Picnic In The Park

Just before this newsletter went to press, we learned that the recent heavy rains have brought with them more than just wet feet. Lake Grapevine is currently twenty feet over flood stage. The pavilion where we were to have had our picnic is underwater. The U.S. Corps of Engineers is closing the lake until at least June.

What this means is that our picnic will not be held on the 12th of May as previously scheduled. For now, the picnic is cancelled. It will be planned for another date. When the plans are set, you will be notified at your chapter meeting and through this newsletter.

Thought For The Month

*Nudists are People
Who Wear
One-Button Suits*

Amiga By-The-Loop Brent Wood

Quite a crowd this time! Over FIFTY members and guests in attendance. A new record!

David got us started with a few announcements about the new club name and a reminder to all to watch their newsletter mailing labels for membership expiration dates. You could expire and not even know it. Your membership renewal date is on your label. Look now and make sure this isn't your last newsletter. It IS?! You had better get with it and RENEW!

A couple of guys from INOVAtronics (and I'm sorry but I didn't get their names) showed off CanDo! for everyone. It seems that about half of the club already owns this product. Several questions answered for members and a general introduction to the program and what it "can do". (Get it?) Thanks guys, and sorry I don't have your names.

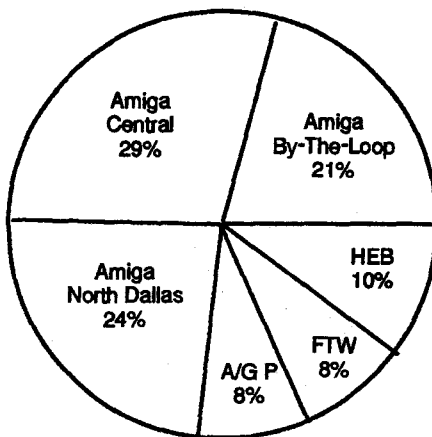
Next time we are to meet is Tuesday, May 8. Seven-thirty in room 208 of the North Richland Hills Church of Christ.

Amiga Central Jack Smith

A new item was added to the list of regular topics discussed at every MCCC Amiga

meeting. Besides our normal agenda of club news, roomers, questions and answers forum and featured

demonstration we now reserve a few moments to demonstrate the shareware title of the month. This month's program is the famous "Play" program by Mark Riley. This program allows you to play Sonix scores without having to own or run the Sonix music composition program. To encourage our members to try these programs, the club librarian will have a special disk available featuring the title of the month.



In other news, Ray Howard and Bill Keatley were on hand to demonstrate SimCity. SimCity is a simulation of city planning which places the user in the position of mayor. Besides the day-to-day tasks of setting tax rates, building Nuclear power plants and regional highway systems, options can include both natural disasters like floods and earthquakes and some really weird ones like having a monster attack the city if you feel your constituents are becoming complacent. This software is so good the author has been asked to develop a larger version which could let city planners forecast real city growth trends.

The meeting was finished off with a short series of Amiga video clips shown by Jack Smith. Special thanks to Amazing Computers for the door prize this month which was won by Don Wagner.

Amiga North Dallas Craig Bird

Our meeting this month featured a demonstration of the Canon Zap Shot, a still video camera, and its uses with DigiView and DigiPaint III by Brett Hester. It is very interesting to see a camera that captures photos on a floppy disk rather than conventional film. This was one of those "you had to be there" demonstrations, since it has so much versatility and usefulness when used with the Amiga. There are many ways to edit the existing image when using DigiView and DigiPaint III including changing the appearance of an object or person. (For our demonstration, Brett used the photo of one of our members and actually added sideburns and a beard to the picture.) Pretty neat!

The rumor mill was running hot tonight with all the latest gossip about the Amiga 3000(?) and whatever the new Workbench release will be titled. The latest word from Commodore is that they will make an announcement about their new products by the time you read these notes. Let's hope they will back up their product line with some effective advertising aimed at the business community. We would all like to see the major software developers bring new productivity software into the Amiga market. A local peripheral manufacturer, Applied Engineering, well known for their top quality Apple (pardon the expression!) floppy drives, etc., is beginning production on 1.76mb high density floppy drives for the Amiga. Their full page ad in the May edition of Amiga World magazine details their intentions.

Amazing Computers announced that their new Ft. Worth store would be open sometime in early May. Is this store hot or what? We hope you attended their latest party and picked up on some good buys and perhaps one of their giveaways. Tonight's door prize, Stellaryx, donated by Sonia King at Amazing was won by chapter member Steve Downes. Enjoy!

Kevin Wambsanz is interested in organizing a programming SIG for

those who are serious about programming. If you would like to participate please let him know at 214-221-8652.

We're looking forward to seeing you on Wednesday, May 16th, at 7:30 PM. Please let a friend know about our new chapter, too!

Arlington/Grand Prairie Eddie Allen

The first meeting in our new location was a very enjoyable experience. The Stoneridge Homeowners Association Club House has an even more relaxed atmosphere than the Community Center, and we would like to thank them sincerely. Sherry Alexander was instrumental in obtaining this location for us, and in appreciation we unanimously voted to award our annual Honorary Membership to her, and she graciously accepted.

Richard Jorick uses Vizastar 128 in conjunction with his business. This program is a combination spreadsheet, database, and graphics presentation package. It is written entirely in machine language, therefore speed is one of it's good points. It is hard to find anything lacking in this package.

The spreadsheet portion is the best known part, but the other two sections integrate together in a fashion that has to be seen to be appreciated.

The MS/DOS 123 spreadsheet is the otherworld equivalent. Macros perse' are

not supported, but it uses a programming interface that can be specified in the spreadsheet alongside your data, allowing a

very flexible utilization.

The agenda for the next meeting has not been finalized yet, so come on out and be surprised. Go a few blocks north on Center to Grants Pkwy (at the second dip sign), turn right and the center is around the bend on the right side.

The Saturday workshop will be open, so until next month, be careful.

Fort Worth Ellen Triplett

Well, here we go again with a different meeting date for this chapter. Hopefully this will be the last deviation from our normal second Saturday schedule. Due to circumstances beyond our control, the only time available for us in the month of May will be Saturday, the 26th. We are put in this position and live with it to the best of our ability because this is one suitable location which we may use - free of charge - and it is a VERY good one (large, clean, easily accessible, etc.).

Public thanks are due to Mary Louise Hagemeyer for stepping in and taking up the slack for me during a bad personal crisis time for me. While the problems are far from being solved or eliminated, this club - its members - and my love of computers, is of extreme importance to me and I am trying very hard to get at least this part of my life on an even keel. My thanks to all of you for putting up with me.

At our last meeting, Saturday, April 14, Donald Tate, our chapter librarian, brought to out attention 6 new disks - #543 (Speedscript Word Processor, Turbo Disk, Formmaker, invoice printer, etc. for the 64), #544 (64/128 disk with Budget V.2, 1581 tool kit, etc.), #545 (64 catalog program), #546 (Formatted disk to accept data from 64 catalog program), #547 (128/64 disk with 128 RAM, DOS, Meta III, BTP V.3, Menu.sda, etc.), #548 (Business card program, Easy to Speed, etc.).

Rich Meyer discussed the possibility of combining t h e

ASCII board with the graphic board. (706 Protocol for downloading 128).

John Sookma spoke of prospective programs for the May meeting (Spreadsheets), June meeting (Library discussion), and July meeting (Hodge Podge - anything of interest to the membership). To the members of our other chapters who can and would like to participate in these or any other meetings, you are welcome. This time we were fortunate to have Brad Dumler from the Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter and John Ware from HEB.

Mary Louise presented a short music program for the 128 and the meeting broke into separate segments, each centered around various setups and subject discussions.

Brad Dumler demonstrated the General Word Processor on a 128D using a Gemini Star 1000C printer.

Mary Louise used a 128 with a 1571 disk drive for a General Question/Answer session.

Rich Meyer with a 128D & Panasonic KX-P1092 worked with Fleet System for 128.

James Dunnam on the C64 with 1541 used Write Stuff Word Processor.

The informality of the format of this portion of our program seemed to fit admirably and everyone was able to pursue whatever he (or she) needed or fancied. Personally, I'd like to see this happen again.

Happy computing and see you later.

H.E.B.
Robyn Wilson

At the April 21st meeting, it was announced that the new librarian for the chapter was to be Anna Luedtke. The discussion was on how to install GEOS on a 1581 drive. This drive uses a 3 1/2 inch disk.

At the next meeting, there will be several different programs introduced that are geared for the new Commodore user. It will be held on Saturday, May 19th at 1:30 p.m. at the Hurst Rec. Center. On May 12, the Spring Fling will be held. It is a great way to meet other members of other chapters of the Commodore Club.

MCCC Board of Directors

Board of Directors

President	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825
Vice President	Craig Bird	817-540-3360
Treasurer	Harold Williams	817-483-0537
Secretary	John Malmstrom	817-282-6158
Librarian	Gary Campbell	817-297-4125
Education Chair	Rich Meyer	817-292-6387
BBS Coordinator	Okley Moss	817-282-7751
Newsletter Editor	Bill Raecke	817-465-2014
Past President	Jack DeTore	817-275-3762

Assistants

Amiga Library	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825
	Bill Raecke	817-465-2014
64/128 Library	Joe Ostrokol	817-534-1990
BBS	John Malmstrom	817-282-6158
	Bill Raecke	817-465-2014
	Harold Williams	817-483-0537
Newsletter	Okley Moss	817-282-7751
	John Malmstrom	817-282-6158
BBS Numbers		817-268-4191
		817-268-4196

MCCC Chapter Officers

Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter

President	David Owens	817-577-2304
Vice President	Mark Cooke	817-838-6960
Treasurer	Bruce Nelson	817-498-0899
Secretary	Brent Wood	817-246-3707
Librarian	Gary Campbell	817-297-4125

Amiga Central Chapter

President	Bill Keatley	817-485-0666
Vice President	Ray Howard	817-265-6287
Treasurer	Bill Raecke	817-465-2014
Secretary	Jack Smith	817-731-8108
Librarian	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825

Amiga North Dallas Chapter

President	Craig Bird	817-540-3360
Vice President	Wm. Dockendorf	214-407-0564
Treasurer	Bob Shary	214-771-8742
Secretary	Genny White	214-422-7131
Librarian	Brett Hester	214-233-5493

Arlington-Grand Prairie Chapter

President	Glen Herring	817-572-0489
Vice President	Jim Souba	817-561-1318
Treasurer	Blake Brown	214-642-6107
Secretary	Eddie Allen	214-259-1741
Librarian	Jerry Hiatt	817-649-1358

Fort Worth Chapter

President	Rich Meyer	817-292-6387
Vice President	John Sookma	817-346-6690
Treasurer	James Dunnam	817-923-6153
Secretary	Ellen Triplett	817-295-5709
Librarian	Donald Tate	817-926-2078

Hurst-Euless-Bedford Chapter

President	Eldor Luedtke Jr.	817-377-4135
Vice President	Jon Moreland	214-579-1293
Treasurer	Bill Howe	817-577-3898
Secretary	Robyn Wilson	817-282-3458
Librarian	Anna Luedtke	817-377-4135

The Fine Print

The Mid-Cities Commodore Club

Statement of Purpose

The Mid-Cities Commodore Club is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education, and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school, and in business.

Legal Stuff

The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines, Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC, C64, C128, and Amiga) are registered trademarks of Commodore, Inc.

Meetings and Membership

Our meetings are open to all. Family membership dues are \$20 per year or \$12 for six months, and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC News, free access to the club's extensive public domain and shareware software library, and discounts at many area merchants. An additional \$12 annual fee provides access to the MCCC ASCII and Graphic Bulletin Board Systems.

The MCCC News

Copyright Information

Material printed in the MCCC News is not copyrighted unless so noted. Articles may be reprinted or otherwise distributed by other user groups or by individuals who may find it helpful as long as proper credit is given to the author and to the MCCC.

Advertising

The MCCC News accepts two kinds of advertising. Member ads are those which are submitted by a member and which are not of a commercial nature. There is no charge for member ads. Commercial ads are those which advertise multiple like items for sale. Rates for camera-ready commercial ads are as follows for a single month or (consecutive three months): Full Page - \$36 (\$96); Half Page - \$18 (\$48); Quarter Page - \$12 (\$32); Business Card - \$6 (\$16). Materials to be inserted will cost \$.08 per copy (duplication not included) and must be inserted into all newsletters for the month.

Articles

Members are encouraged to submit articles. Articles should be submitted as ASCII text. They may be uploaded to the MCCC ASCII BBS, to StarText (MCCC), or on disk. If these methods are not possible, I will, as a last resort, accept printed articles. If graphics need to be included they may be submitted as Amiga IFF files, PageStream structured drawings, or, again as a last resort, printed output.

Deadline

The deadline for submissions to the MCCC News is the Monday following the third Saturday of each month. Payment must accompany all ad copy. Make checks payable to MCCC and mail to P.O. Box 813, Bedford, Texas 76095.

Extra Copies

Extra Copies of the MCCC News may be obtained for \$1 per copy. Orders should be forwarded to the club along with the required fee. Orders must be received by the regular newsletter deadline.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 8 Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm - N. Richland Hills Church of Christ
6300 NE Loop 820, N. Richland Hills
David Owens, 817-577-2304

May 8 Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
7:00 pm - Stoneridge Homeowners Assn. Clbhs.
500 Grants Parkway, Arlington
Glen Herring, 817-572-0489

May 12 Picnic in the Park and
MCCC Board of Directors
Silverdale Park - Lake Grapevine
Ned Kelly, 817-277-5825

May 12 Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop
1:30 pm - Grand Prairie Library
Jerry Hiatt, 817-649-1358

May 16 Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm - Richardson Civic Center
411 West Arapaho, Richardson
Craig Bird, 817-540-3360

May 17 Amiga Central Chapter
7:30 pm - Arlington Community Center
2800 S. Center, Arlington
Bill Keatley, 817-485-0666

May 19 Hurst-Euless-Bedford Chapter
1:30 pm - Hurst Recreation Center
Mary Drive South of Pipeline
Eldor Luedtke, Jr., 817-377-4135

May 26 Fort Worth Chapter
1:30 pm - Southwest Regional Library
4001 Library Lane, Fort Worth
Rich Meyer, 817-292-6387

June Newsletter Deadline - May 21

NORMAL MEETING SCHEDULE

1st Sat MCCC Board of Directors
2nd Tues Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
2nd Tues Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
2nd Sat Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop

2nd Sat Fort Worth Chapter
3rd Wed Amiga North Dallas Chapter
3rd Thurs Amiga Central Chapter
3rd Sat HEB Chapter

MCCC NEWS

Metroplex Commodore Computer Club
P.O. Box 813
Bedford, Texas 76095

BULK RATE
U.S. Postage Paid
Bedford, TX
Permit No. 32

Address Correction Requested

Time Value - Do Not Delay

Note Membership Expiration on Label